implementation of these projects, TV service is expected to become available to substantial parts of tribal areas in the State.

(c) Doordarshan's Seventh Plan, *inter alia*, includes an amount of Rs. 35.00 crores for the various TV schemes in Bihar.

Increase in the Illiteracy in Backward and Tribal Areas of Bihar

485. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the 1981 census the illiteracy percentage in some of the backward and tribal areas in various districts of Bihar has increased to a considerable extent as on 31st December, 1987;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to give financial assistance to Bihar Government to tackle for problem of illiteracy among S.C. and S.T. especially among girls/women; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF WELFARE (SHRIMATI SUMATI ORAON): (a) No Sir. The figures of 1981 census in Bihar indicates improvement as compared to 1971 in percentage of literacy in respect of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe population.

(b) and (c) However, considering the need and the importance of literacy particularly amongst girls/women, a number of programmes including adult education, vocational training, provision of hostels, scholarships etc., are being continued for S.Cs. & S.Ts.

Procurement and Sale of Pulses

486. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that owing to the involvement of middlemen, pulses are selling in the market at much higher prices;

(b) at what prices the different pulses are being procured and at what prices these are sold to the consumers, State-wise;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Central/State procurement Agencies are not able to reach most of the villages and, as a result thereof farmers are compelled to sell their produce through middlemen; and

(d) to what extent the selling prices of pulses could be reduced if middlemen are eliminated and what steps are being taken to abolish involvement of the middlemen in the transaction of pulses?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI D. L. BAITHA): (a) There is a free trade in pulses in the country and their prices are largely determined by their demand and supply. The prices of pulses vary from place to place. However, due to drought conditions in the country, prices of pulses are ruling high. In a vast country like India, business is run through various tiers of trade and in the process some increase in the prices of pulses is due to the margin being charged by the trade.

(b) and (c) Pulses are covered under the price support scheme of the Government of India. However, the market prices of pulses in the producing centres are ruling well above the support price level and, therefore, there is no question of procurement by the State agencies, at this stage. The retail prices of arhar (split), moong (split), masoor (split), urad (split) and gram (whole and split) at selected centres are given in the attached Statement I to VI. [*See* Appendix CXLV, Annexure No. 21].

(d) With a view to containing the prices of pulses, through increased

availability, the following measures have been taken:

(i) Pulses have been put under the Open General Licence (OGL);

(ii) National level Agencies, viz., State Trading Corporation of India and National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd., are importing pulses during the current year;

(iii) Enforcement of the provisions of the Pulses, Edible Oilseeds and Edible Oils (Storage Control) Order, 1977, under E.C. Act, 1955; and

(iv) A special programme is being implemented during the 7th Plan to increase the production of pulses.

Scientific Technologies to Tackle Drought Impact

487. SHRI MAHENDRA PRASAD: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what specific scientific technologies have been evolved to minimise the impact of drought on agricultural production uring the current year; and

(b) to what extent the Plant targets for various items of agricultural production for the current year are likely to be achieved with the adoption and promotion of these technologies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH AND EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HARI KRISHNA SHASTRI): (a) To reduce the overall impact of the current drought on India's agricultural production, the following technologies have been recommended:

AGRICULTURE

1. Crop production practices for important rabi crops such as wheat, rice, barley, pulses and oilseeds both under irrigated and rainfed situations.

2. Important crops and areas have been identified under assured growing conditions for meeting the future seed requirements and augmenting the seed supply.

3. Package of practices for promising fruit crops which can tolerate drought conditions have been evolved.

4. *FODDER*

(i) Punjab and Haryana States have around 10.5 m. tonnes of paddy straw. This straw is being utilised for livestock feeding after suitable treatment.

(ii) Considerable amount of sugarcane bagasse is available in some sugarcane growing areas in the country. This bagasse can be utilised as cattle feed after suitable treatment;

(iii) Intensive production of fodder crops in assured/limited water supply situations.

(b) To meet the short fall in food production due to drought in kharif season the targets of rabi production were fixed at 76.0 m. tonnes. To meet this target suitable crop production technologies have been suggested for various regions.

This programme has been implemented by different States and the present indications are that the rabi harvest will be better than that of th previous year.

Development of Towns in Madhya Pradesh under Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns

488. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total amount of money that has been released to different States under the centrally sponsored scheme of Integrated Development of Small and Medium Towns